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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on part of a longitudinal study of the interaction between labor relations and governance in one suburban school system. It focuses on the all-important relationship between the school board and the superintendent in an Illinois school district. When dissension between these two parties occurs, it is possible for teachers to bargain with both, playing one management faction against the other in contract negotiations. Thus arises a kind of three-way (multilateral) bargaining process, with the superintendent caught in the middle. Two dimensions (consensus and the degree of vulnerability in the governance structure) are most relevant to the interaction between collective bargaining and governance. The combination of these dimensions yields conflict, in varying degrees. For example, high vulnerability and low consensus mean high persistent conflict. The concepts used in this case study are useful for studying the whole school governance process. (Author/DS)

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Impacts of Collective Bargaining on School Governance:

The Case in a Suburban School System

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Introduction

This paper reports on part of a longitudinal study of labor relations in a suburban school system. The larger study deals with how the labor relations system of the school changes over a period of organizational and political turmoil in the district, and how the labor relations process affects the overall governance of the school. The larger study is incomplete and would be too long to deal with adequately here. So instead this paper focuses on one limited, but important aspect of the school operation: the relationship between the school board and superintendent. By showing how labor relations fits into that link, we will describe some tentative hypotheses about important effects. Those hypotheses will then be available for testing further in the larger research and elsewhere.

Our main attention is on neither labor relations nor governance per se, but on the interaction between the two. There has been considerable attention to how labor relations works, in schools and elsewhere.[1] Some of these works have dealt with the impacts of labor relations on some part of administration and governance. A series of studies have examined impacts on salaries and other aspects of resource allocation.[2] Others have examined specific aspects of the administrative process of the schools.[3] But these studies have not dealt adequately with the question of how the style and process of governance affects labor relations, or how labor relations fits into the political structure of school governance. In short, the interaction works both ways and that proposition is the basis for the findings reported here.

The concept of a two-way interaction is well established in the basic views of the labor relations process. Walton and McKersie describe the importance of intraorganizational bargaining in both labor and management.[4] From our perspective, intraorganizational bargaining on the management side is key to the governance process. The way management makes decisions and builds consensus affects its

position at the table; the conduct of bargaining affects the way decisions are made. Dunlop's concept of a "web of rules" as the context of labor relations clearly indicates that the rules are part of the management system and affect both parties concerned.[5] Management viewed as coordinator of bargains, in Chamberlaim and Cullen's work, points out the connection as well.[6] The quality of bargains struck by the management side in other arenas determines the amount of maneuvering room in labor negotiations. And the nature of the labor bargain determines the maneuvering room in the rest of the management process. All of these perspectives strongly indicate that we should look within both the labor relations system and the management process to find the best understanding of either.

Because most of the schools are public, another dimension of the governance, bargaining relation is added: multilateral bargaining. Observations in several public employment situations have found indications of labor unions attempting, at times successfully, to establish bargaining links with both management and a superordinate government body (such as a city council or state legislature).[7] The equivalent in the school situation would be the teachers bargaining with both a negotiating team from administration and directly with the school board. In such a situation the union has the opportunity to play one side against the other to generally weaken the management side and achieve better outcomes at the table. But the consequences can go beyond the bargaining process to affect the relationships between board and administration in general. And conversely, the quality of the relationship between the board and administration would be expected to determine in part the opportunities for multilateral bargaining. As soon as bargaining becomes a multiparty process, the opportunity for coalition formation arises. This further complicates the overall pattern of relationships and raises the possibility of new governance patterns.[8]

Studies of school governance and politics have generally given relatively

little attention to the place of labor relations. Some exceptions have come out of the severe conflicts in New York City in the late 60's and early 70's.[9] Others have given direct attention to labor relations as a result of concern specifically for the teacher's role in school governance,[10] or for the legal aspects of labor relations.[11] But the primary topics of attention have been the relationships between board of education, administration, and community (with some attention to state and federal relations). Since these three main components of the governance process are central to intraorganizational bargaining on the management side, they are a useful point of departure for this study. We use the board-superintendent-community relationship as a source of the questions which guide the inquiry.

Approach to the Study

The first set of questions arise from the board-superintendent link. There is some dispute as to which is the dominant actor in the system. Ziegler and Jennings work supports the board as dominant. But others such as Iannaccone and Lutz see the board as selecting a superintendent which fits their objectives, but allowing the superintendent considerable operating discretion which eventually leads to superintendent dominance.[12] Labor relations provides a mechanism, especially through bargaining structures--to change the relationships between the superintendent and the board members. This is one key area of the inquiry.

The board's links to superintendent and community are also related to its own orientation. A number of elements of orientation deserve specific attention:

1. how the board members view their individual roles; as representatives of a specific constituency, as free agents or trustees, or as political compromisers.
2. how the board members view the division between policy making, and administration, and professional control.

3. overall pattern or style of decision making of the board in terms of high or low visibility, conflict, concensus, etc.
4. orientation of individual board members toward teachers as employees and as members of a union.

These four aspects of board orientation form one major basis for our information gathering about the governance of the district.

The other questions involve the overall context of economic and political factors in which the school exists and the conduct of the labor relation process itself. The overall economic and political contexts are described through information gathered from newspapers and other documents, interviews with school personnel and local residents, and census data. The conduct of the labor relations process is examined by discussions with the principle actors, review of contracts and related documents, detailed notes and records of the bargaining processes, and external observations from local residents and newspaper accounts. In addition to these documentary sources and interviews, a survey of the district teaching staff was conducted. The questions explored attitudes about the union, past strikes and labor conflict, feelings toward the board and administration, and general militancy. Some of these results are included in this report. The last principle source of information involves campaigns for positions on the school board. Much of the governance dynamic described later hinges on the changes in membership on the school board since the last election. Of the two school board members discussed here, one was defeated in a bid for reelection on April 10. Thus the special conditions discussed below have changed.

Background

Centerville, Illinois is located in the outer fringe of the Chicago metropolitan area, approximately 60 miles from the loop.* In the early 1960's, it was nearly all single-family living units; the total population

*The identity of this community has been disguised to protect the confidentiality of sources.

being 10,000. Factories and small family owned businesses dominate the population center and the community is surrounded by farmland. The city itself has a heritage that stems from the mid-1800's, and many families have been around for several generations. Centerville is linked to Chicago by rail and some people commute. The town, in the 60's, was predominantly lower-middle to upper-middle class, with a few upper class people living just outside of town. The area was solidly Republican and conservative, but the area has become increasingly Democratic. The new apartment complexes brought many low-income families into the town, many of whom receive public aid. Many old families are still there, but they are less influential in political affairs.

In the mid 1960's, Centerville had three school districts. One served the 3,000 elementary age students within the city limits. There were three grade schools with one having a junior high. The second district was very similar (three elementary schools with one attached junior high), but the schools were outside the city limits, with a separate board and superintendent, and served the rural community. The high school was located in the center of town, and both junior high schools fed students to it. It comprised the third district; its board included a mix of businessmen and farmers, though dominated by businessmen. School board elections were seldom contested, with most of the candidates being known personally to much of the population. Centerville is also the home of the Catholic High School that serves the entire county. The elementary school staffs had a high proportion of female teachers, with a few men found at the junior high level. Most non-high school teachers were members of the Centerville

Education Association, CEA, an affiliate of the National Education Association. Just over 50% of the high school teachers were members of the Centerville Federation of Teachers, CFT, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers. In 1966, the CFT teachers at the high school went on a one-day strike for bargaining rights; the strike was successful.

The CFT bargained its first contract in 1966 with the high school board. In 1967 the superintendent of the high school left, and discussion began concerning the possibility of forming a unit district, combining the three existing ones. A new superintendent was hired in the high school district. In 1968, after considerable controversy, a referendum approving a unit district was passed by the votes. The three separate boards were dismissed. A new board was elected for the unit district, District 402, and the former high school superintendent became the chief administrator.

With the unit district established, the CEA assumed bargaining rights, since the CEA had the majority of teachers in the unit district. There was continuing competition between the two unions; both organizations continued to gain members. The organizational split diminished the bargaining power of the teachers. Consequently the CEA was unable to achieve its objectives in negotiations.

About the same time a fairly new resident of the community, Mr. D., began to write letters to the editor of the local paper criticizing the local schools and the superintendent. He was joined frequently in the protest by other residents advocating lower expenditures or criticising the administration of the school system. There is evidence of generally increasing local

participation in school governance and an increasing amount of unrest among some citizens, mostly new residents.

In 1973 Mr. D. was elected to the board of education by a very narrow margin; he became a dissident and highly vocal member of the board. Negotiations became much more heated as Mr. D joined the bargaining team and spoke for himself and the "taxpayers." In May of 1974 the teachers became so frustrated with their weak position and the board's position in bargaining that they formed a merger of the two teacher groups. The merger group became known as the Centerville Teachers Confederation (CTC) took over the bargaining in 1974.

Governance Process

One of the dominant features of the school governance system in Centerville is the nature of the school board itself and its relationship with the superintendent. The Board itself has been divided on a consistent 5-2 basis since the 1974 election. In that election another new board member, Mr. M., who consistently sides with Mr. D., was chosen. Their presence has been a dominant feature of most of the governance and bargaining issues since then. The situation is quite similar to that described by Iannaccone and Lutz:

> Individuals who defeat incumbents may or may not begin with the intention of struggling with the superintendent. However, since the superintendent is a key figure in establishing educational policies and goals that the new member seeks to change, the new member is likely to find that his chief opponent is the superintendent.[13]

This accurately describes the Centerville situation. The primary difference being that instead of one new board member, there are two. From the description of several of the main governance issues below, it will be clear

that the battle between these two board members and the superintendent is a central feature of both the labor relations and control processes of the system.

These two new members do not, on the basis of election results, represent a strong community feeling of opposition to the existing school board policies. Because the field of candidates for the Board was large, it was possible for both new members to be elected with a rather small percentage on the vote. The fact that they have seldom been able to recruit any of the other board members to side with them on important issues suggests that the level of support for their position is low in the majority of the community. Nonetheless, their impact on school affairs has been substantial.

The two board members in question did not appear to come onto the board as a coalition, although it seems they both come as opponents to existing policies. One of the new members was elected from a distinct section of the district, campaigning on the basis of better representation for this particular constituency. The second new member ran as a "reform" or "taxpayer's" candidate, but does not seem to represent any particular geographical constituency. In the period soon after their election, the new members were not a consistent minority faction on the board. But one series of events resulted in an alliance which produces a pattern of 5-2 votes on most school board issues. Those events were the negotiations for the 1975 contract. Both new members represented the board on the negotiating team.

The 1974-75 Negotiations

The structure of the board negotiation team for these negotiations is a reflection of the basic style of operation. The team was composed of a

professional negotiator, the superintendent, and two board members. In spite of a considerable body of advice against such a decision, the superintendent and board agreed to board members on the negotiations team. The best explanation offered for this is that those two members were eager to participate. Given the rather laissez faire style of the board, the newcomers were allowed to take a place on the team. That structural decision has lead to several important consequences for both the labor relations and overall administration for the period of the negotiations and to date.

The process of the negotiations was affected both by some important substantive issues between the board and teachers (mainly salary and teacher evaluation), and by the behavior of the negotiators themselves--particularly the Board team. Their actions certainly do not account for all the conflict, but do appear to be an important factor. When there are tough substantive matters on the table, it is even more important that the negotiators be skillful and well organized, and make every effort to reach agreement. One critical event shows that among the new board members this was not the case.

In 1974, the negotiations had been proceeding for close to six months. One of the critical issues still to be resolved was the salary package for the new contract. During this sensitive time Mr. D inserted into the negotiations what has been called the "dog food speech." A CTC-prepared transcript of the negotiations has a verbatim account:

> Can you explain to me why a school teacher is a super citizen and should not suffer the pangs of inflation? They <u>are</u> going to suffer forever. You are not going to be whole at my expense. You tell me why a teacher is different. You are not going to have the taxpayers cut and keep your standard of living up. You would be surprised at some of the people I have been talking to on the phone, and I don't think you would like me to mention names. You are going to get just as hungry as the rest of the people. When you get that through your head you will get a contract. Get off and try eating dog food like the rest of the people here.

The effect of such a provocative statement by a member of both the board and negotiations team was quite predictable. It became very difficult for the teachers to settle an agreement without some sort of militant action to save face and restore what they referred to as "teacher dignity." That translated into a strike.

As far as the teachers are concerned, the restoration of dignity was the major reason for the resulting strike. In a survey the teachers were asked to rate the importance of various causes of the strike. The results for the salary and dignity issue are shown in Table I. It is clear that while salary was

TABLE I

Percent of Teachers Rating Importance of Strike Issues

Issue	Rating: not very important	fairly important	very important	
Dignity	9%	5%	86%	n=140
Salary	12%	16%	72%	n=140

an important concern, it was eclipsed by dignity as a cause of the strike. That becomes even more clear when the answers to the importance of dignity are divided according to whether or not the respondent participated in the strike. Those results are shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Percent of Teachers Rating Importance of Dignity as Cause of Strike

Participated in Strike	Rating: not very important	fairly important	very important	
yes	7%	2%	91%	n=119
no	19%	19%	62%	n=21

Even among the nonstriking teachers dignity was an important issue. But the strength of feeling among the strikers is impressive indeed.

A single speech, regardless of how inflamatory, is usually not sufficient to precipitate a strike or other serious manifestation of conflict unless there are contributing factors. In these particular negotiations the other factors were indeed present. It is useful to trace the events leading up to the break-off of negotiations and ensuing strike to show how the factors are related.

The 1974-75 negotiations had been long, but rather productive up to the events of early October. From the beginning of the negotiations in May there had been considerable progress in approving a long and rather complex contract. However, there was some residual dissatisfaction among the teachers from the previous contract, and problems during the present bargaining on issues of salary and merit pay. Teachers had publicly said they were "screwed" in the last negotiations and were displeased with the school board pushing the merit pay issue as a major point in the current talks. So while approving the rest of the contract had been relatively straightforward, there was little reason to believe the salary package would be easy. To confound matters, there was to be a district referendum

on additions to the high school in October. Both sides had expressed the belief that the community would refuse the bond issue and that the school system would be in some financial difficulty, even before knowing the results of the negotiations. It was not much of a surprise, therefore, when the board's "final" offer in the negotiations of September 28, was rejected by the teachers' negotiators. The union's negotiation team said they could not recommend the package to their members. They scheduled a meeting for the afternoon of Wednesday, October 2, to take a strike vote; a strike was authorized by a large margin.

Following the strike vote there was an evening negotiations session. At that session the teacher negotiators made clear that they could not accept the board's position and that a strike was near. The board team proposed a mediator be brought in, but the teachers refused. There was some small movement of the teachers salary position. Then Mr. D made his "dog food" speech. Surprisingly, the talks continued, but after six hours they were still too far apart. The session adjourned and a strike began the next day (Thursday) with picket lines at all schools. A copy of the "dog food" speech was circulated to the teachers by the CTC.

The Board's response to the strike was to keep the schools open through the use of substitutes, take legal action against the teachers, and threaten dismissal of all strikers. These actions were taken immediately. A list of substitutes from a large area around the district was already prepared and put to use. On the first day of the strike the board sought an injuction against the strikers. They also began preparing letters of dismissal for the individual teachers. There was a procedural flaw in the process of seeking an injunction, so a new hearing was set for the following

Monday. Therefore the teachers had two days without legal action in which to begin the strike. On Saturday, October 5, the board mailed the dismissal letters, threatening to dismiss any teacher which did not report for work on Tuesday, October 8. The effect of these tactics was to force the teachers to accept mediation. On condition that negotiations would continue with the assistance of a mediator, the judge did not enforce the injunction. Monday, October 7, the teachers agreed to return to work the next day and a contract was signed on October 8.

In terms of the salary component of the final agreement, the strike was somewhat successful for the teachers. The salary terms agreed to by the board were more than those in the final offer just preceeding the strike. However, the board was able to maintain its insistance on some merit-based components of the salary schedule. And the size of the overall salary package was approximately 9½ per cent, well below the 12 per cent the teachers expected. Because the strike itself was so short, it could not be called a thorough test of strength of the two parties. But it does appear that the teachers' ability to withstand a full range of board anti-strike tactics is limited. The teachers felt there was little support for their cause in the community. Teachers tended to feel that the board's dismissal threat was genuine, and the injuction was taken quite seriously. Having once refused mediation over the board's "final" salary offer, the teachers were forced to change their position and resume negotiations. Thus it was a concession by the teachers, in the face of heavy board pressure, which was the basis for resuming negotiations.

This strongly suggests that the teachers were in a weak position and would not be sucessful in a long strike. However, since the strike demonstrated that the confederation could at least launch a concerted action, there was some strategic gain by the union.

Our purpose here is not to explain the strike in any definitive way, but it is useful to look at alternative explanations as evidence of the relationships between the board and superintendent. The first question has to do with the board's tough bargaining position on salary. That position was certainly one of the chief causes of the impasse. So we must inquire whether it was a result of true financial exigencies, or some other cause.

The financial condition of the school system does not support the idea that the bargaining position was a fiscal necessity. Just two years after the strike the board had accumulated a financial surplus sufficient to begin a $ 650,000 addition to the high school without a bond issue. This surplus was already started during the 1974-75 negotiations. And there had not been a tax increase for several years. So there did not seem to be a clear fiscal reason for the board's actions.

Another explanation is more plausible. An examination of the reports of the negotiations show the two new board members taking a consistently hard line on costs. They were elected to the board in part on a cost-saving platform and carried that objective into the negotiations. Notes from the negotiations show numerous comments by D clearly reenforcing the hard fiscal line. This position is also consistent with actions of these two board members on other financial matters in open board meetings. They consistently challenge expenditures, from large to miniscule amounts, and

press for economies in all areas of operation. This seems to be a stronger influence on the board's bargaining position than any objective fiscal constraint.

The 1974-75 negotiations provide one clear example of how one or two board members can, under certain circumstances, strongly affect the conduct of labor relations and other school affairs. To show the overlap between labor relations and other aspects of the governance process we turn attention to other areas of the school operations. One clear example is the dispute over the high school accreditation report.

The North Central Report

In 1975 the high school was visited by a team from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, a voluntary accreditation organization which accredits high school and higher education associations in the Midwest (one of four regional accreditation agencies). Accreditation is important since most colleges and universities do not accept high school diplomas from non-accredited secondary schools. So while the North Central Association (NCA) has no legal status, its evaluation process is critical to a school system.

One of the NCA standards calls for clear delineation between board of education and administrative procedures. Individual board members are not to involve themselves in the administration of the school without explicit approval of the whole board. This criterion provided a point of contention between the administration and board member D.

Producing the report of an NCA accreditation involves a sign off by the administrators of the school system. The principal of the high school was thus required to indicate by his signature that he accepted the report of the visitation team. The principal refused to sign on the grounds that the report was untrue in the area of board interference in administrative affairs. There were several documented instances of a board member (Mr. D) initiating offical contact directly with the principal without the approval of the superintendent or board. In the principal's view this was failure to meet the NCA criterion. He would therefore not sign a report which said the school did meet that criterion. Without the principal's signature the board had to make special provisions to forward the report to NCA and risk loss of accreditation.

This issue prompted a lengthy dispute, involving several newspaper articles, editorials, and extended board meetings. The board member argued that since the NCA had no legal standing, the board and its members could do whatever they pleased and continue to take the individual actions they thought to be in the best interest of the school system. In this case the framework for the NCA visitation and accreditation process gave the individual board members access to a critical decision or action of the school system. Thus an individual or minority faction of the board could exercise influence out of proportion to their membership on the board.

The dispute over the NCA report gave the new board members opportunity to bring public attention to sections of the report which were unflattering to the superintendent. Each time the issue of the report came up in board meeting or news media, the opportunity was there to further embarrass the superintendent. These opportunities were seldom missed.

In this case, an individual board member was fairly successful in using an existing arrangement for promoting and publicizing an objective. There is another, less successful, example of the same process. That involves the decision of the board to use the accumulated surplus to renovate and add to the high school building.

The Budget Surplus

During the period of 1968 to 1975 the board accumulated a surplus of $1,200,000 from state aid revenues. There had been some dispute over the legality of such an accumulation. But the opinion of the Illinois Office of Education was that it was permissible. During the 1975-76 school year the board voted, 5-2, to transfer part of the surplus to the building fund for work on the high school. The board proceeded to advertise for bids on the construction work, while the new board members sought to block the action, first by public appeals through the newspaper, then by legal action against the board itself.

In the legal complaint, the new members argued that the construction was illegal without a referendum, and that the accumulation and transfer of the surplus funds was illegal as well. The case was heard in the

state circuit (trial) court in March of 1976. An opinion was expected in early April.

The timing of the opinion was important in light of the election of school board members scheduled for April 10. Mr. D. was one of the board members up for reelection, as well as one of the plaintiffs in the suit. A ruling in favor of the plaintiffs would be a strong boost to their claims of illegal board action as well as to their campaign for reelection. As it turned out both the suit and the campaign were unsuccessful. Just one week before the election, the Circuit Court ruled in favor of the Board on all parts of the complaint, and there appears to be no attempt on the part of Mr. D. and Mr. M. to appeal. It is not possible to tell how important that court ruling was in the voting, but Mr. D. ran seventh on a field of eight candidates, well out of contention for the two available board seats.

The Governance-Bargaining Interaction: Some Generalizations

The time period of interest in this study includes a major realignment in the labor relations of a school system through the restructuring of the union, and the presence on the board of a small, divisive faction acting consistently against the superintendent. So it may be true that the specific events and relationships observed are extreme examples. But there seem to be sufficent parallels between this situation and most other school systems to suggest some generalizations worth pursuing. This section outlines the main ones growing out of these observations.

The three sections of school governance described above--bargaining, accreditation, and fiscal decisionmaking--are to a large degree vulnerable processes. That is, the structure of decisionmaking allows for the intervention by a relatively small minority of the official participants to have a strong, or even decisive influence. In the bargaining, one member of the board was able to gain access to the bargaining team and exert a strong influence. It is relatively easy to see how the process of accreditation and fiscal decisionmaking of the board are vulnerable in these terms. Because accreditation is based on consensus over goals and adherence to several unambiguous standards, a few parties could disrupt the consensus or fail to achieve the goals. Thus while most of the school system fits the accreditation standards, a small part could be divergent. The fiscal decisions of the board are always open to litigation. Since the courts are explicitly designed to guard minority interests, that route is always open for dissent or divergence. It is not as clear, however, why the bargaining process should be as vulnerable as these other aspects of governance. That question is worth closer attention.

The vulnerability of District 402 bargaining grows, it appears, out of two major characteristics of the process: one in bargaining, one in governance. It is well established that one key element of the bargaining power of either of the parties is the fact, or at least the convincing appearance of solidarity. In strategic terms the value is clear; the credibility of a threat is directly related to the parties' power to bind themselves to act. Without solidarity the threat becomes

a hollow gesture. Consequently, intraorganizational bargaining is as important on the board side as for the teachers. If one small component of the board is determined to maintain itself as a vocal opposition, it is a constant threat to the solidarity of the management team. When that vocal faction is at the same time openly provocative and abusive toward the teachers, it not only disrupts the solidarity of the management side, but increases the cohesiveness of the teachers at the same time. Without the "dog food" speech, it is doubtful that the teachers would have been as unified on dignity as an issue as was shown in the survey. When the dissident board member or members are on the negotiation team and have access to the full process, their power to influence events is greatly increased. Since the superintendent and board majority are responsible for the success of the bargaining, the minority faction can, if it chooses, disrupt the process to discredit the rest of the administration. Thus the bargaining structure in this case is particularly vulnerable.

But that finding leads directly to the question of how the governance process could allow the small faction of the board to attain this position of influence in the bargaining process. For an answer to that question we must look to three aspects of the governance process: (1) the ideological base of school politics, (2) the style of decisionmaking, and (3) voluntary nature of school board membership. The ideological aspects of school governance of interest here are the anti-politics bias, and the trusteeship orientation of school board members. The anti-politics bias is the strongly held feeling that schools are and

should be kept apart from politics, unsullied by the crass concerns of professional politicians. Thus school elections are nonpartisan, studiously avoided by the parties and other elected officials and conducted usually in a highminded, public service atmosphere.

One important consequence is that the persons on boards are largely assumed to be serving in the public interest, and tend, according to Jennings and Ziegler, to view themselves as trustees. A trustee is one who acts on the basis of principal and good judgment rather than to represent any particular constituency or point of view. To further add to the trustee image, board members serve without pay and are usually drawn from the civic elite of a community. The consequences for governance of this pattern are to add substantial, and often spurious, legitimacy to the actions of anyone who sits on a school board. That is, they are assumed to act in the public interest unless proven otherwise. There is, thus, usually an absence of the checks and balances present in other forms of government to guard against the self- or special interest motivations which are assumed for other elected officials. This lack of checks and balances is particularly obvious in District 402. The board itself has no apparent mechanism for handling the disruptive behavior of individual members, or enforcing the majority intent without serious protest or delay from a small minority. This is in part due to the personal style of the president of the board, and part to the superintendent's unwillingness to confront or challenge individual board members in meetings.

Because the board members are volunteers, and usually civic elite, another factor is important: they are often pressed for time. Board affairs can be very time consuming, especially negotiations. This is particularly important in District 402 since Mr. D's occupation allowed large amount of time to spend on school board affairs and permitted him to volunteer for the negotiations team. Thus he could make a logical case for serving on the team. Since the ideology assumes he serves in the public interest, that sort of logic can be persuasive, especially since the other board members are less able to afford the heavy time commitment involved in bargaining. Given these factors it is easy to see how Mr. D and Mr. M could have been allowed on the negotiations team.

The conflict between the new board members and the superintendent introduces another element of governance interacting with the bargaining process. There is good reason to believe that public sector bargaining tends to be multilateral, especially where the administrative arm of the agency is somewhat separated from the elected or policy arm. The union can then work with the administration and board separately to some degree, so there is in fact a three-way bargaining process. This mechanism provides yet another opportunity for a board member to work against an administrator.

Thus the administrator can be caught between the erosion of autonomy represented by the contract on one side, and the encroachment of the board on administrative matters on the other. In one conversation the District 402 superintendent described bargaining as a process where "the board always loses." In this situation it was not clear how that

could be, since it was clear that relative to the superintendent, the board was gaining more control of the day-to-day operations of the system. So we concluded that what he meant was that the superintendent always loses--either to the teachers or to the board itself.

Vulnerability and Consensus

In trying to summarize the interaction of governance with bargaining, as observe in this case, two dimensions seem most relevant: (1) the degree of consensus in the governance system, and (2) the degree of vulnerability in the governance structure. The degree of consensus would be relatively straightforward to describe in terms of votes of the board, support of the superintendent on his or her proposals, contract renewal, etc. The vulnerability of the structure could be expressed in terms of explicit checks and balances among contending powers, such as clear procedural rules or patterns of control process in board meetings, control of agenda, control of appointment of committees, negotiations teams, control of information flows by the superintendent or board president, autocratic superintendent behavior, etc. While there are probably interaction effects between these two characteristics of schools, consider for discussion that they are independent dimensions. We can then describe a rough 2x2 typology of governance or bargaining systems as shown in Figure A.

Figure A

Comparison of Conflict, Consensus, and Vulnerability
in School Governance Structure

Consensus	Vulnerability: High	Vulnerability: Low
High	medium conflict not persistent	very low conflict
Low	high persistent conflict	low persistent conflict

In this figure conflict includes bargaining and other disputes or competition in other aspects of governance. The nature and level of conflict in bargaining and other forms of governance should be related to the degree of consensus and vulnerability of the structure, as shown above. District 402 falls in the low consensus, high vulnerability area of the typology. The structure and style of the bargaining process and the rest of governance are clearly vulnerable in the terms described above. When a disruption of consensus occurs in such a system by the introduction of dissident board members, conflict should be high and persistent. If the main dissident board member is replaced by one in agreement with the rest, District 402 should shift to a lower, but still appreciable conflict level, since its high vulnerability allows even a small disturbance to strongly affect the system. If changes in administrative or board procedures were to reduce the vulnerability of the structure, the district could move toward very low conflict mode of operation. Such changes could include removing board members from the

negotiations team, giving the superintendent more control over bargaining information and process, or providing clear control of board procedure through rules. These same changes could reduce the conflict level even if consensus remains low, thus District 402 would be closer to the low consensus, low vulnerability section of the matrix.

The hypothesis implicit in this construction is that the amount of conflict manifest in the governance (or bargaining) of a school system is jointly determined by the amount of consensus and the presence of mechanisms to control or suppress dissensus. Thus there should be directly observable relationships between the structural characteristics of governance (and bargaining) and the level and persistence of conflict in the process. The fact that bargaining in schools tends toward a three-way interaction among board, superintendent, and teachers, is an increase in the vulnerability in the overall governance structure. That is to say, there are more opportunities for participation by small factions in the decision and control process. Therefore, unless there is a concomitant shift toward lower vulnerability, just the onset of bargaining should lead to more open conflict, both in labor relations and the rest of the school governance process. Conversely, the degree of consensus or vulnerability in the governance process should then effect the ease with which bargaining produces a workable agreement.

These are the interactions suggested by the case. We do not suggest that this is in any way a complete treatment of the ways in which bargaining and governance interact. Instead, this suggests three

variables---conflict, vulnerability, and consensus--which bridge across both bargaining and the rest of the school governance process. By continued study of these variables and their interaction we believe that both a better understanding and better functioning of the bargaining process will result.

Notes

1. See, for example, Charles R. Perry and Wesley A. Wildman. The Impacts of Collective Negotiation in Public Education. Worthington, Ohio: C.A. Jones, 1967; Donald Gerwin, ed. The Employment of Teachers. Berkeley, California: McCutchan, 1975.

2. Michael W. Kirst. "After School Finance Reform: What Will Low Wealth School Districts Do With Unrestricted State Aid?" Stanford, California: School of Education, Stanford University (mimeo), 1975; Jay G. Chambers. "The Impact of Collective Bargaining for Teachers on Resource Allocation in Public School Districts: The California Experience." Paper given at the Southern Economic Association Meeting, November, 1975; David B. Lipsky and John B. Drotning. "The Influence of Collective Bargaining on Teachers' Salaries in New York State." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 27:1 (October, 1973).

3. Some of these studies are: Don Hellriegel, Wendell French, and Richard B. Peterson. "Collective Negotiations and Teachers: A Behavioral Analysis." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 23:3 (April, 1970); Michael J. Murphy and David Hoover. "Negotiations at the Crossroads: Increased Professionalization or Reinforced Bureaucracy?" IAR Research Bulletin 14:2 (February, 1974); Alan M. Glasman and James A. Belasco. "The Chapter Chairman and School Grievances." Industrial Relations 14:2 (May, 1975).

4. Richard E. Walton and Robert W. McKersie. A Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

5. John Dunlop. The Industrial Relations System. New York: Henry Holt, 1958, pp. 13-16.

6. Neil W. Chamberlain and Donald E. Cullen. The Labor Sector. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971, pp. 226-229.

7. See Thomas A. Kochan. "City Government Bargaining: A Path Analysis" Industrial Relations 14:1 (February, 1975) and also Perry and Wildman, above.

8. The importance of coalition formation in bargaining is reviewed by Jeffrey Z. Rubin and Bert R. Brown in The Social Psychology of Bargaining and Negotiation. New York: Academic Press, 1975, pp. 64-80.

9. See David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street. New York: Random House, 1968, and Maurice R. Berube and Marilyn Gittell. Confrontation at Ocean Hill-Brownsville. New York: Praeger, 1969.

10. Alan Rosenthal. Pedagogues and Power. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1969; Ronald G. Corwin. Militant Professionalism. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1970.

11. William R. Hazard. "Collective Bargaining and School Governance." Southwestern University Law Review 5 (1973) pp. 83-117; and Larry G. Simon. "The School Finance Decisions: Collective Bargaining and Future Finance Systems." Yale Law Journal 83:3 (January, 1973), pp. 409-460.

12. L. Harmon Zeigler and M. Kent Jennings. Governing American Schools. N. Scituate, Mass.: Doxbury, 1974; and Laurence Iannaccone and Frank W. Lutz. Politics, Power and Policy: The Governing of Local School Districts. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1970.

13. Iannaccone and Lutz, Politics, p. 175.